

Slugs, Nightmares, & Panic Attacks! OH MY! by TeamEtharahRules

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Angst, Friendship

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-08-06 16:58:49

Updated: 2017-12-07 16:04:45

Packaged: 2019-12-17 03:01:56

Rating: K+

Chapters: 6

Words: 5,766

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: A few months have passed since Will Byers came back from the dreaded Upside Down and he's having a hard time recovering. Will his friends be able to help or will he have to deal with the nightmare alone? Or I want some Will centric angst and friendship bonding to happen

1. Chapter 1

A/N: Hello everyone! I am back with a new story. If you have read my stories, then great, if not, then dishonor on you, your cow, and your family! Haha I'm just kidding. This is just a small story that I have been wanting to do since I saw the trailer for Season 2! I hope yall enjoy!

DISCLAIMER: I don't own Stranger Things because that wonderful right belongs to the great Duffer Brothers.

Running...being chased by the monster

Its haunting shriek close behind

It is getting closer...closer...

hot breath on my neck

clawed hands reach out to grab me and...

Will sat up in his bed with great ferocity. His breath came in short, quickened gasps as the feel of the Demogorgon still lingered on his skin. His gasps soon turned into coughs that shook his thin frame. Will felt the familiar tug of nausea in the pit of his stomach and rushed to the bathroom as quietly as possible. He made it to the toilet just in time for a slug to fall out of his mouth coated in a black slime. He weakly flushed the toilet and went to wash his hands, in case his mother or Jonathan came to check on him. He washed his hands with no interruption and walked back to his room.

He froze in the hallway as the door to Jonathan's room opened with a small squeak.

"Will? You okay?" Jonathan mumbled half-asleep.

Will nodded his head and said, "Yeah, I'm fine. Just had to go to the bathroom. Go back to sleep."

"You don't have to tell me twice. Goodnight Will." Jonathan closed the door and Will sighed in relief. He walked back to his room and

climbed into bed.

He reached over and turned on his lamp. He pulled his knees up, reached for his comic book on his nightstand, and began to read. It was Dustin's X-Men 134 that Dustin had given to him while he was in the hospital after coming back from the Upside Down. Will was thankful for the comic book because he knew that he would not be going back to sleep that night.

A/N: this is just a beginning. The next chapters will be longer(I hope) and there will be friendship bonding between the boys. Please review and comment. I love yall and have a blessed day.

2. Author's Note

Hello my dear readers!

I am so incredibly sorry that I haven't uploaded the second chapter to this story. I have been incredibly busy with work, church, and second year of college just started so I'm trying to figure out my routine again. I have to do all this reading for two classes and I barely have time to read my fun book. Well enough of that ranting on.

This paragraph is me gushing over how many of y'all have read this story. I was so happy to see 30 views in 2 days. I also got my first review from candy95 and that made me so happy. I'm going to try and get that second chapter up this weekend so keep a weather eye on the horizon. I love all of y'all and hope you will read the next chapter.

Love,

TeamEtharahRules

3. Chapter 2: Will? What's Wrong?

A/N: OH MY GOODNESS! I am so sorry guys! This is my 2nd year of college and it is crazy busy. Y'all don't want to hear that though. How about that final trailer for season 2 though. AH, IT WAS SO AMAZING! I CAN'T WAIT FOR FRIDAY! The final trailer prompted me to finish this story before Friday. I am going to try so hard to get the last 3 chapters in before Friday, but here is Chapter 2 right now. First, some shoutouts. (Que Stranger Things theme song)

candy95: Thank you so much for following this story and being the first to review. I am dedicating this chapter to you. I hope you enjoy it and have a great weekend.

Roger (Guest): Thank you also for reviewing this story. I hope you enjoy this chapter, please review again.

Disclaimer: I do not own Stranger Things. It belongs to the wonderful Duffer Brothers.

Will and Lucas walked down the hallways of their school and entered the AV club room, which was close to Mr. Clark's science classroom. The boys sat down in their chairs while they waited for Mike and Dustin to join them.

"Where are they?" Will asked as he shrugged his backpack off of his shoulders.

"Dustin is probably drooling over Sadie and Mike is probably wondering why he is friends with Dustin." Lucas said as Will giggled.

"Yeah. Dustin is totally crushing on Sadie. It's hilarious." The boys laughed as they imagined different scenarios of Dustin talking to Sadie. Their merriment was short-lived as Will's laughter turned into a persisting cough.

In between coughs, Will said, "Can...cough...you get me...cough... a cup of....cough... water?" Lucas quickly left the room and filled a cup with water from the water fountain.

When Lucas returned, he saw Will's eyes wide with panic. Lucas assumed it was because of the coughing, but, in reality, Will was feeling a slug climbing up his throat, ready to come out in front of Lucas. Lucas went over to Will and gave him the cup of water. Will graciously took the cup, chugged it down, and sighed in relief as the coughing stopped and the slug stopped climbing, for now. Unfortunately, Will knew that even though the slug didn't come, the Upside Down was going to come through. No sooner as he thought it, the real world flashed out of existence and the Upside Down replaced it. Will looked around at the damp, cold, and miserable place that haunted his dreams. Every sound was the Demogorgon and every shadow was a monster lurking, waiting to attack. A twig snapped behind him. Will knew what would be waiting for him when he looked, but he turned around anyways and saw the Demogorgon looking at him. Will began to run, but the Demogorgon stopped him and grabbed him by the shoulder.

Will began to panic as the creature opened its mouth, but stopped when it sounded like the creature was saying something. Will listened and gasped when he heard his name. It started out as a whisper and gradually grew to a loud yell. Will shook out of the monster's grasp and the Upside Down disappeared and Will opened his eyes to see Lucas standing in front of him, not the Demogorgon. Will sighed in relief while Lucas looked at him in concern.

"Will? What just happened? Your eyes were glazed over and you were shaking and not listening to me. Don't tell me it's nothing, because that sure as heck was something."

Will dropped his head in defeat and didn't look Lucas in the eyes. "I've been having flashbacks of the Upside Down." He mumbled and Lucas barely heard him.

"What did you say, Will? Speak louder." Lucas softly said to the young boy.

"I said that I've been having flashbacks of the Upside Down and the Demogorgon. It happens at random times, but when it does happen I go into a trance of sorts. I'm sorry if I worried you." Will said with his face towards the ground.

Will looked up with wide eyes when Lucas enveloped him in a hug. Lucas was not the hugging type, but he made an exception for his friends. "Don't ever apologize for anything that happens from your time in the Upside Down. You survived hell in there, man, but you got out. We knew there would be some side-effects, but we will get through it and we will help you. You don't have to do this alone, dude. We're here for you." Lucas told Will as they continued hugging each other.

Suddenly Mike and Dustin walked in and Dustin was about to say something to the boys about being late when Mike hushed him. Mike pointed to Lucas and Will hugging and the boys nodded. Mike and Dustin joined in the hug and all of the boys, especially Will, knew that if anything was ever wrong with any of them, that the boys would have their backs.

4. Chapter 3: Sleepover at Dustin's

Hey guys! OH MY GOODNESS, SEASON 2 IS SO AMAZING! If you haven't watched it yet, then leave this story now and go watch it. I'm serious, it is so good! That is the reason why I haven't posted since the last chapter. I was binge-watching season 2. Anyways, here is Chapter 3. This is a Will/ Dustin bonding chapter, I don't think we get many of those so here is one. I would also like to clarify that I will not be using curse words in my writing. It will always be a substitute. Okay rant over, time for shoutouts and the dreaded disclaimer.

candy95: Thank you again for reviewing my story and for being patient with my updates. I hope you enjoy this chapter.

PercabEmily7: Thank you for following this story. Please enjoy the next chapter.

thepurplewriter333: Oh my goodness! Thank you so much for reviewing, following, and favoriting my story. It made me so happy. I hope I can continue this story to your liking. Enjoy this chapter.

Disclaimer: I do not and will not ever own Stranger Things, sadly.

The dismissal bell rang loud and clear and students ran out of the building. The only ones who walked were Will, Mike, Lucas, and Dustin. They talked as they walked over to their bikes, conserving their energy for the bike ride home. When they reached the bike rack, Dustin asked, "Okay. Who asked their parents if they could spend the night at my house tonight?"

"I did. My mom said it was alright, after worrying for a hour." Will said.

"Okay, Will is coming. Anyone else?" Dustin asked as he looked at Mike and Lucas.

"I asked my mom, but she said we were going out of town to visit

cousins for the weekend. Sorry man." Mike told him and Dustin looked at Lucas.

"I would be coming too, but my mom grounded me for not cleaning my room. I gotta go straight home and clean my room until she is happy with it." Lucas explained.

"Well Will and I have will have fun without you two babies." Lucas and Mike stuck their tongues out at Dustin and Will laughed at his friends. Today was a good day for Will. He didn't have any slugs come up or any panic attacks, he was happy.

The boys climbed on their bikes and headed away from the school. Lucas and Mike said their goodbyes when the boys came up to Mike and Lucas's house. Dustin and Will biked to Dustin's house and parked their child vehicles outside in the garage. They entered the empty house, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson were still at work, and went to Dustin's room.

Dustin's room was full of D&D and Star Wars posters plastered on the walls. Will set his backpack and sleeping bag down and went straight to the Atari that Dustin had. The two boys played the games and laughed with each other.

Dustin would occasionally glance at Will and see that trademark smile of his plastered on his face. Dustin was so happy that Will was there with him and happy. Ever since Will came back, Dustin hadn't gotten to be with Will alone that much and Will wasn't as happy as he used to be. Dustin knew today was a good day, which had become few and far between. The game had to end when the boys heard the front door opening and closing, the signal that one of the Henderson parents were home. The boys walked into the kitchen where Mrs. Henderson was laying out some food for dinner.

"Hey Mom." "Hey Mrs. Henderson." Dustin and Will said in unison. Mrs. Henderson smiled at the boys, "Are you boys hungry for some dinner?" The boys looked at each other and nodded their heads enthusiastically. Dustin's mom laughed and told them to go play while she cooked and she would let them know when it was time to eat. The boys went back to the bedroom and looked at Dustin's comic collection. Will pulled some out of his backpack and Dustin saw the

X-Men comic that he had given Will. "Are you still reading that comic, Will?" Will looked down at the one Dustin was looking at and said, "No, I carry it around when I need a good laugh or I can't sleep at night. Thank you Dustin for giving me this when I was in the hospital. It has helped me more than you know." Dustin smiled and touched Will's shoulder, "Anytime, buddy. Anytime."

The evening flew by as the boys had a fantastic dinner, played a few more games, and then watched Star Wars together. The boys played out the "Luke..I am your father." part of the movie; Will playing Luke and Dustin begging to be Darth Vader. After a while, the boys decided to go to bed. Will laid on the floor, despite Dustin's complaints.

"What did we all agree on when we started having sleepovers?" Will asked Dustin.

"If we stay over at someone's house, we sleep on the floor and the person sleeps in their bed."

"What is the exception?"

"Mike's basement, where we all can find somewhere to sleep without being on the floor." Dustin replied.

Will smiled and Dustin couldn't help but laugh. The boys laid down; Will on the floor and Dustin on the bed. The boys talked for a little while until the darkness and the pull of sleep sent Dustin into a snore fest. Will laid awake trying to think of anything that would keep him awake, but not disturb Dustin's sleep. After fighting the lull of sleep for a few hours, the exhaustion hit Will like a bag of bricks and, unwillingly, he closed his eyes and went to sleep for a few hours.

Will sat up on the floor, wide-eyed and shaking as he came out of the recent terror-induced nightmare. He put his hand over his mouth to stop the high-pitched gasps of air he was trying to pull into his lungs. He knew if he didn't cover his mouth, then the Demogorgon would hear and get him. His attempt at being quiet had failed because Will soon heard the concerned voice of his friend, Dustin. "Will? Are you okay?" Dustin asked as he turned on the lamp beside his bed. Dustin's eyes widened as he saw Will shaking as if he was cold, but sweat

matted his hair. He watched as Will's eyes darted around the room as if something was going to get him.

"Will? Would you like to come up on the bed with me?" Will nodded his head up and down, saying yes. He shakily got off the floor and climbed onto Dustin's bed. "What happened, buddy?" "I had a nightmare. It's stupid and I shouldn't get so worked up over it. I'm sorry that I woke you up." Will replied back.

"It's not stupid, Will. Everyone gets nightmares and it's normal that you would have some after being in that place for as long as you were. Also, don't apologize ever again, like ever. There is nothing to be sorry about, because it isn't your fault. You can tell me anything Will. I am your best friend and you are mine. I may not know how to help, but I can dang sure try." Dustin ended his speech as Will hugged Dustin. "Thank you Dusty." Will spoke in Dustin's ear. "Anytime, Willy, anytime."

The two boys remained like this for a good half hour and then they broke off. Will felt he could trust that Dustin would understand and try to help, so he told Dustin what happened in the nightmare. Dustin did his best to comfort Will and finally the young boy fell into a peaceful sleep. That next morning, Mrs. Henderson would find Dustin and Will sleeping in the same bed and she would see Dustin with a protective arm over Will. She was so proud that her son protected his friend.

A/N: I hope y'all enjoyed this. Please review and comment. Next chapter will be Will and Mike, but it's not going to be romantic Byler just friendship Byler. I will try and post it as soon as possible, but I have 3 papers due soon so we'll have to see. GO WATCH SEASON 2! Love y'all.

5. Chapter 4: Slugs Revealed

A/N: Hello my lovely and loyal readers. I am so sorry it's been awhile since I last updated, but all of my papers are done and I am ready for finals, so here is a congratulatory chapter just for you guys. But first, like always, I have many shout outs to tell. (drumroll)

Shoutouts:

thepurplewriter333: Thank you for reviewing the last chapter and thank you for the good luck charm, it helped. How did you like Season 2? I hope you enjoy this chapter.

candy95: Thank you for your review and for being so loyal to this story. I hope you enjoy this chapter.

kyretta1: I was so happy when you followed me and my story. Thank you so much, please enjoy this chapter.

Last, but not least TheRealSokka: Thank you for following me and my story. I love your story, by the way. I hope you enjoy this chapter.

Disclaimer: I don't own Stranger Things...sadly.

P.S: This is platonic Byler, not romantic Byler. If you want to interpret that way, then be my guest but it was my intention to do platonic.

It was a normal day at school for the boys. They met at the bike rack before school began, talked about the new campaign, and then went inside the school building. Troy and his goons didn't mess with Will if Mike and the others were around, so no bullies that day. The only difference in their routine was a test in Mr. Clarke's class. The boys were usually the first ones done in class, so it was normal for them to pass notes about campaign ideas. Mr. Clarke knew that all of them were done, so he didn't bother with them, knowing that they weren't cheating.

Will the Wise was passing a note to Mike when he felt the tug of nausea sweep over him as he knew a slug would come up soon. He told Mike he would be back and then went up to Mr. Clarke's desk and asked for the bathroom pass. Will hurried to the nearest bathroom and checked to make sure nobody was in there. He then went to the stall nearest to the wall and stared at the water in the toilet until he felt the tickle in his throat. He began to cough and throw up that day's slug.

Mike's POV

Mike noticed Will had been gone for a little while and he wouldn't normally be worried about it, but, after what happened, he couldn't help but not worry. He motioned at Lucas and Dustin to stop writing ideas and look at him.

"Guys, Will has been gone for a while. Should one of us go check on him or just wait for him to come back?" Mike asked them. Lucas and Dustin both agreed, for once, that they should check on him. They told Mike their experiences with Will. Lucas seeing him have an episode and Dustin comforting him after a flashback-induced nightmare. They all worried that he was having another episode.

"You should go check on him, Mike. He'll respond better to you. He always does." Dustin told Mike. He didn't say it bitterly, but as a matter of fact. Mike nodded and went up to Mr. Clarke's desk.

"Mr. Clarke, can I go check on Will? He's been gone for a while and he looked sick when he left." The sick card works every time and it worked this time as well. Mike was given the other hall pass and went to the closest bathroom first to see if Will was in there. He opened the door and immediately heard retching and the shaky gasping of breath.

"Will? Is that you?" Mike called out and the retching noises abruptly stopped. Mike checked the stalls and saw Will's shoes in one of them. He crawled under the stall and saw Will hunched over the toilet seat with a slug-like creature coming out of his mouth and into the toilet with a 'plop' sound.

Will's POV

Will kept coughing trying to get rid of the slug in his throat when he heard the bathroom door open. He didn't bother with whoever it was because they would just leave once they thought he was throwing up. He immediately stopped when he heard his name being called. It was Mike.

He wanted to tell him to leave, but Mike had already crawled under the bathroom door. Will couldn't do anything when the slug came out and into the toilet, with Mike being witness to it all. Will watched the slug fall into the toilet in slow motion. The slug made a 'plop' noise as it hit the still water. Will spit out the remainder of the slug's slime, flushed the toilet, and pushed himself away from the latrine and up against the wall. He watched as Mike came towards him, sat down, and waited until he was ready to talk.

After an uncomfortable silence, Will looked at Mike and put his head down. "I'm sorry you had to see that Mike. If you want to stop being my friend, then I understand." Will spoke in a quiet voice. Will felt Mike put his hand on his own and Will looked up into Mike's wide eyes.

"Will, I will never stop being your friend. Friends don't leave when a friend is hurting. Whatever this stuff is, we will figure it out. I'm here for you Willy." Mike said to him in a calm, comforting voice.

Will suddenly pulled his hand away from Mike's. "But you won't always be there, Mike! I lost you for a week and I thought I would never see you or anybody else again. I can't reach you when I have a nightmare at night. Why would you want to be with me, anyways? I'm a freak, Mike!" Tears spilled down Will's face and Mike could tell he had been holding these feelings in for a while.

Mike was surprised at Will's sudden mood change, but quickly changed his facial features as he pulled Will close to him. He put his chin on Will's head as Will sobbed into his chest.

"You are not alone, Will. We are all here for you and you should know that I would do anything to be by your side through this. I've got your six, man. We're both freaks, but that's what makes us best friends. You are my best friend, Will, and I am happy that you are. I'm never leaving you, Will."

As Will listened to Mike's little speech, his sobs lessened and he was able to calm himself down. He took one last little squeeze from his hug with Mike and separated from him. He looked at Mike with a small smile on his face. "Thank you Mike and thank you for not giving up on me."

"Anytime, Willy. Now how about we get out of here and listen to one of the famous Dustin/Lucas arguments." Mike and Will laughed. They checked to make sure nobody was in the bathroom and came out of the stall. Will then washed his face and mouth. The two best friends walked out of the bathroom with a stronger bond created than they had had before

A/N: I hope yall enjoyed this chapter and I will have the final chapter up soon. Please review and comment if you have anything to say. Love yall.

6. Chapter 5: My Friends Are Awesome

A/N: Hello my lovely readers. This is the last installment of this story. I am so happy that yall enjoyed this story. I have three other stories that will be coming out soon. One for Riverdale and two for Stranger Things, but they will be one-shots. I hope yall can read those as well.

Well it's time for the last shoutouts:

AstralWolf: Thank you for favoriting this story and I hope you enjoy this chapter.

Phieillydinyia: Thank you following and favoriting. I like your name, very unique.

thepurplewriter333: Thank you again for your review. I'm so happy you are enjoying this story and I hope you can read my one-shots.

candy95: Thank you for being loyal to this story from the beginning. I hope you enjoy this last chapter.

Disclaimer: I don't own Stranger Things and I sadly will never.

Without further ado, Chapter 5!

It was a normal Saturday afternoon in Hawkins, Indiana. The sun was shining and the birds were singing. That's why it came as a surprise to the residents when the thunderclouds rolled in and rain poured down from the sky. Many people would take it as a bad sign, but our band of misfits saw it as the perfect background noise. The pouring rain and howling wind created a veil of mystery that was perfect for the boys' game of Dungeons and Dragons.

Will the Wise had just fireballed a horde of trolls that were about to attack the party. The threat destroyed, Lucas rolled the die to determine the next choice in the campaign. Unfortunately, Lucas rolled too hard and the die flew off of the board. The boys scrambled out of their seats to find the die and the number it would tell them.

"What number was it?" Dustin asked. "I don't know, Dustin." Lucas replied back.

"Where did it go?" He asked panicky. "We don't know, Dustin." His three friends replied back.

"Why don't you come help us here?" Lucas told him sharply.

Dustin went with Lucas to search the box of action figures, Mike checked by the staircase and behind it, and Will went over to the couch and the blanket fort. Will remembered when Dustin and Lucas told him about the fort and how Mike made it for Eleven. Will didn't want to upset Mike, so he was very cautious while looking for the die. He successfully checked the fort without disturbing anything, but no die found. He went to check underneath the couch, thinking it could've fell down there.

He reached his small hand underneath the couch until he felt something hard brush against his fingers. Thinking it was the die, he closed his hand around it and pulled it out into the light. His breath hitched in his throat and Will had to swallow a scream. It was the Demogorgon figurine from the game. Will knew it was just a game piece, but it brought back many awful memories.

~Flashback~

He could feel the Demogorgon's hot breath on his cold, almost numb neck. He felt the muscle cramps in his legs from running through the woods, desperately trying to find his sanctuary, Castle Byers. He felt the numbing exhaustion as the toxic air filled his tired lungs. He heard the monster outside the fort and saw the wood splinter everywhere as the creature destroyed his hiding place. He suffered the harsh grip of the monster's hand as it picked him up. He struggled and fought as hard as he could, but the Demogorgon did something to make him sleep.

He woke up in the library, well the Upside-down version of the library, and saw Barbara Holland's dead body with slugs all around her. He thought he was going to die there and be slug food, like Barb, but knew something else was happening when the Demogorgon showed up with some kind of tube or vine. He flinched when the

Demogorgon caressed his cheek and screamed in pain when the monster gripped his jaw and forcibly opened his mouth. He widened his eyes when he realized that the monster was going to put that vine in his mouth.

He began to panic when he noticed that the vine was alive and moving. The monster opened Will's mouth wider and began to shove the twisting vine into Will's mouth and down his throat. Will screamed in agonizing pain until the vine began to cover Will's airways. He knew he was suffocating, but he couldn't do anything. He was pinned against the wall, with more vines beginning to trail across his body, securing him to the wall. His stomach dropped as he felt things moving inside of him. Something very wrong was happening to him and all he could do was look at Barbara and feel the Demogorgon caressing his cheek like a mother would do and his world went black...

~End of flashback~

"I'm going to check by the couch and the fort." Mike heard Will say. He watched as Will delicately checked the fort and smiled, knowing Will was doing it for him. He really missed El and kept the fort in case she came back. His thoughts of the pretty girl that stole his heart were broken when he heard Will say, "I think I found somethi-." All three boys looked at Will when he stopped talking mid-sentence and his body became tense. Mike walked over to him and got down to his eye level. Mike's facial expression changed instantly when he saw the Demogorgon figurine laying on the ground where Will had dropped it.

Mike looked back at Will and saw his eyes were glazed over as if he was having an episode or a flashback. He called Will's name and lightly touched him on the shoulder. Even though it was a light touch, Will went into a frenzy and began to scream and fight Mike. He scratched at him and yelled at him to not take him. Lucas and Dustin ran behind Will and pulled him off of Mike. Mike watched as Will's eyes bulged as if he was choking and suddenly Will took a deep breath, relaxing and going limp in his friends' arms, exhaustion taking over.

Will woke up and wearily lifted his head, looked back and saw Lucas

and Dustin holding him, and then looked at Mike who was nursing a scratch mark on his cheek. "What happened?" He asked his friends.

"You attacked us, Will, but it seemed like it was self-defense. Your eyes were glazed over and it was like you were in a trance. Do you remember what happened Will?" Mike spoke to his friend softly. Will nodded his head no.

"Will, we are your best friends. You don't have to hide from us. You have nothing to be ashamed of." Dustin said as he and Lucas released Will.

Will sat down and put his head in his hands. "The figurine...it reminded me of the worst moment in my life. I had a flashback to when the Demogorgon caught me at Castle Byers." His friends nodded, encouraging him to continue.

"After Eleven found me in Castle Byers, I had so much hope. I willed myself to get up and try to get out of the Upside Down. I was walking through the woods and I was almost to my house, but I saw the Demogorgon. I turned back and ran to Castle Byers, because he didn't know where that was and I wasn't going to risk Mom getting hurt. The toxic air filled my lungs and I was so weak and I laid down on the bed in my fort. I heard the monster all around me and then he destroyed Castle Byers. I tried to fight him, but he made me go to sleep somehow. I then woke up in the library and I saw Barb's dead body. The Demogorgon showed up with this vine and he...he." Will took shuddering breaths as he remembered what happened next and tears threatened to fall down his face. The other boys all put their hand on Will's shoulders giving him the strength to continue on.

"He...he rubbed my cheek, sort of like a parent would, and then he forced my mouth open. He began to shove the vine into my mouth and down my throat. I couldn't stop him because these other vines began to cover me and tie me down to the wall. I couldn't breathe and then everything went black until Mom and Hopper brought me back." With tear tracks on his face, Will finally looked at his friends and saw the tears in their eyes as their friend relayed to them of his pain.

"That vine put something in me." Will said.

"Do you mean the slugs, Will?" Mike asked.

"Yes. That's what I think it did to me and Barb, but she didn't survive the slugs." Will told his friends.

Mike noticed the change in Will's demeanor and understood it when Will said, "I've changed. I will never be that normal boy I was a few months ago. Normal boys don't throw up slugs, have flashbacks of a parallel universe, nightmares every night, or panic attacks at the smallest thing. You guys say I'm not a burden, but I can see the toll that worry has taken on you. I don't want anyone else to get hurt, so I'm going to leave. You don't have to worry about me anymore."

Will got up to leave Mike's house, but he was stopped by his friends. They all had put a hand on him; Mike grabbed his hand and Lucas and Dustin grabbed his legs. Will looked back to his friends when Mike said, "We lost you once, Will, and we aren't losing you again."

At that Will broke down in tears, releasing all of the fear, pain, and sadness that he had building inside of him for the past few months. His knees buckled underneath him and his friends caught him and held him in a tight hug. He continued to sob and his friends cried too.

After a while, the boys pulled apart and wiped the water from their faces. The cathartic exercise they performed left them exhausted, but also with a sense of unity between them. These boys knew that they would have each other's backs through thick and thin in this world and any other world.

THE END

A/N: Thank you all for reading this story. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did. Please comment and review. Let me know if yall want me to write a story for a fandom or ideas for a story. MERRY CHRISTMAS!